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Senate

The Senate met at 11 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. GRASSLEY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Master, we honor You for Your glory and strength. Your glory fills us with reverence, and Your strength inspires us with courage.

Bless our lawmakers. Inspire them to find fulfillment in the splendor of holiness. Lord, remind them that You expect people of faith to illuminate the darkness of this world with exemplary actions that prompt people to glorify You. May our Senators remember that their conduct, particularly during times of adversity, has long-term consequences.

Lord, we praise You that You continue to rule our universe.

We pray in Your awesome Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SCOTT of Florida). The Senator from Iowa.

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for 1 minute in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

31ST ANNIVERSARY OF THE VELVET REVOLUTION

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, Iowa is home to a lot of people who have a heritage from the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. November 17 is

coming up pretty soon, and it marks the 31st anniversary of the Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia.

In 1989, the Czech people stood up against Communist rule and, through nonviolent demonstrations, precipitated the nation's transition to democracy. The Velvet Revolution lasted 43 days and in the end ended 41 years of Communist control of Czechoslovakia. Jingling keys became a symbol of the revolution and of the new doors that democracy and freedom from communism would unlock for those great people in Czechoslovakia.

Now we have two countries—the Czech Republic and the Slovak Republic. We also have a National Czech and Slovak Museum in Cedar Rapids, IA. This museum helps to educate Americans about these events I just talked about and, most importantly, to teach them about the importance of never giving up on fighting for freedom.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader is recognized.

CORONAVIRUS

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, last week, the country and the world received some really great news that we have longed for quite a while to hear. A major American drug company, together with its German partner, announced that their candidate for a COVID-19 vaccine appears to be at least 90 percent effective in trials. That is 90 percent—nine zero. Dr. Fauci called these preliminary results extraordinary. Another expert called the news “as good as you could hope for.”

Of course, tests and trials are ongoing. The FDA will perform its own thorough review, which will include analyzing months of safety data. The American people should rest assured

there are appropriate and necessary measures to ensure the safety and efficacy of any vaccine before it is rolled out to the American people, but this will proceed with the lifesaving urgency that is called for.

Right now, COVID-19 is continuing to spread across the country at rates that are not sustainable and which we must try to slow. Yesterday, my home State of Kentucky just logged its highest ever daily total—2,700 new cases. The positivity rate of our tests is the highest since early May.

It is urgent that all Americans continue the smart steps that have gotten us this far: wearing masks, social distancing, adapting our plans and routines. This virus is not going to magically leave us alone if we decide we are fed up with taking precautions, but thank God and thanks to the brilliant scientists, we may look back on this hopeful announcement as the beginning of the end of this terrible ordeal.

I said back in March that our country was about to meet a whole lot of brandnew heroes. Many were going to be doctors and nurses. Others were going to be essential workers who kept society going. Some were going to be the men and women who worked like crazy in labs and research centers until we had this virus beaten. But every single American has a role.

As cases continue to climb, the simple advice—wear a mask, practice social distancing, wash your hands—is now just as important as ever. So, of course, discovering the vaccine will only be a part of the battle. Once one or more candidates have been proven effective and safe, it will be a second Herculean undertaking to scale up production and distribute doses of the vaccine throughout our country. This is why this Senate and the Trump administration have been on the case for months.

As part of the historic CARES Act, we created Operation Warp Speed—a historic effort that combined interagency government work with public-

● This “bullet” symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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